

STUDENTS' OPINION ON SUBSTANCE USE, VIOLENT BEHAVIOR AND POSSIBLE INTERVENTION STRATEGIES IN A NIGERIAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

This study investigated students' opinion on substance use, violent behavior and possible intervention strategies in a Nigerian public university. Two hundred and ninety three participants consisting of 147 males and 146 females with the mean age of 23.67 (SD=3.77) were sampled. A questionnaire designed to elicit student's opinion on substance use prevalence and proclivity for violent behavior as a result of substance use was administered on the participants using a descriptive cross-sectional research design for data collection. Analysis revealed that majority of the students saw substance abuse as a problem in the university (80.5%), and majority have witnessed violence resulting from substance use (61.4%). Alcohol and marijuana were the top two on the list of substances abused by male and female students and it was reported that violent behaviors like sexual assault, physical assault and violent crimes were common to students after they had abused substance. It was suggested by the respondents that the university authority should use regulation and enlightenment to control substance abuse and use punishment and counseling among others to control violent behavior among students.

Keywords: Students' opinion, substance abuse, violent behavior, undergraduates, Nigerian public university

Introduction

Substance use and abuse used to be a sacrosanct issue treated with a lot of secrecy by those who use and abuse them. However, today, students in schools now boast of abusing substances (Azuike, Oni & Dirisu, 2012). It has been found that young people in Nigeria start using and abusing substances at a young age. Young people sampled from the eastern part of the country reported that they started drinking between age 11 and 20 (Chikere & Mayowa, 2011) while those sampled from the southern part of the country reported “14 years or below” as the age of initiation into drug use (Fatoye & Morakinyo, 2002, p.299). Shehu and Idris (2008) who sampled respondents from the northern part of Nigeria had participants aged between 10 to 14 in a secondary school in Zaria who were already smoking cannabis.

Substance use and abuse has been found to start as early as when students are in secondary school. Adelekan and Ndom (1997) compared two studies they conducted with secondary school students in Nigeria and found that drug use among the respondents reduced in 1993 from what they observed in 1988. However, they noted that rural secondary school students were engaging more in substance use and smoking was majorly used by males (Adelekan & Ndom, 1997). The trend changed in 1998 when it was observed that mild stimulants, antibiotics and alcohol were highly used substances among these secondary school students (Adelekan et al, 2000). Adelekan and Ndom (1997) also found that some of their respondents reported using cigarettes and cannabis frequently that is, daily and weekly.

Secondary school students in Lagos use caffeine predominantly (Oshodi, Aina & Onajole, 2010) but also use alcohol, tobacco, cannabis and so forth. While those in Kwara state have been found to predominantly use alcohol (Abiodun Adeleka, Ogunremi, Oni & Obayan, 1994). In rural Nigeria, secondary school students have been found to abuse the following drugs in increasing order, tobacco, Kolanut, Alcohol and Alabukun “a local analgesic” (Lawoyin et al, 2005, p.355). Other studies using secondary school students seem to concur with the findings reported above among these young people (Anochie & Nkanginieme, 2000). Interestingly, Fatoye and Morakinyo (2002) had earlier reported the use of analgesics, stimulants, antibiotics, alcohol, hypnosedatives and tobacco among students in urban and rural areas in Nigeria. Majority of their respondents reported being daily users of tobacco. Hence, it could be inferred that secondary school students in urban Nigeria use and abuse substances as much as their counterparts in rural Nigeria.

In a recent study, it was reported that young adults between 18 to 25 years of age were the population with the highest vulnerability to substance abuse while adolescents between the ages of 11 to 17 were reported as the second highest population vulnerable to substance

abuse (Azuike, Oni & Dirisu, 2012). The age of 18 is the average age that students enter into universities. It seems that students tend to continue a culture of substance use and abuse already learnt in secondary schools when they enter into universities. Chikere and Mayowa (2011) reported a prevalence rate of 78.4% for alcohol among some undergraduate students in southeast Nigeria. Among the 482 Students they sampled, more than half (277) reported drinking about 1 to 3 bottles of alcohol per day and about 214 of the participants were initiated into alcohol use at an early age (Chikere & Mayowa, 2011).

Medical students in Nigeria have also been found to use psychoactive substances. While Ihezue (1988a) found a prevalence of alcohol use (60%) with a lifetime prevalence of 56%, Makanjuola, Daramola and Obembe (2007) have found a high prevalence of mild stimulants, alcohol, sedatives, and tobacco with a lifetime prevalence use of 67.9%, 38.0%, 27.0% and 10.5% respectively with males reporting more use than females in all the categories. Some of these medical students have been found to be occasional abusers (Ihezue, 1988a; Makanjuola et al, 2007). The use of substances like alcohol, mild stimulants and sleeping tablet among medical students have also been linked to “self-reported study difficulties” (Makanjuola et al, 2007)

Among the highest in the drugs abused by undergraduates in a northern Nigerian university, are: cigarette, brewed alcohol, locally brewed alcohol, Kolanut Apsirin and Cananbbis (Essien, 2010). The challenge with the use of these substances becomes evident with the rising spate of HIV/AIDS incidences among young people in Nigeria (Fawole, Ogunkan & Adegoke, 2011; Odu & Akanle, 2008). Imaledo, Peter-Kio and Asuquo (2012) have reported that the use of alcohol and cigarette predisposes undergraduate students to sexual risk behavior. Sexual risk behaviors have been indicted as a major predisposing factor to HIV/AIDS and responsible for the increasing number of incidences in Nigeria (Fawole et al, 2011; Odu & Akanle, 2008).

The prevalence of alcohol and drug use is not just seen among students but also among teachers undergoing training. Egbochuku (2006) reported that teachers in training whose parents were involved in their lives in terms of monitoring their behaviors, and being involved in their lives reported less need for alcohol than their counterparts residing on campus. This brings to the fore the role of parents in curbing substance abuse.

Although university undergraduates in Nigeria use stimulants as have been noted by studies (Azuike et al, 2012; Chikere & Mayowa, 2011; Ihezue, 1988, Makanjuola et al, 2007), Egbochuku, Aluede and Oizimende (2009), have found that Nigerian undergraduates do not depend on stimulants. Although Egbochukwu et al reported the rarity of stimulant

dependence among the 800 undergraduates sampled, the reported data suggests otherwise. At least, more than one quarter of their sample responded to “often” and “most often” as their dependence rate on Amphetamine, Caffeine, Cocaine, Colanut and Tobacco. Interestingly, more than half reported using Caffeine and Colanut often and most often. It is the experience of the present authors that drug abuse should not be seen in terms of significant level but percentage or even by the presence of use or abuse since drug abuse is relative which means that the amount of drug that will affect one person might not affect another person. Hence, reports like these should be treated with caution so as not to encourage drug use and abuse unless supporting studies on interacting factors necessitating non dependence are empirically conducted.

Surprisingly, Kobiowu (2006) found no relationship between drug abuse and academic performance. In fact, from Kobiowu’s study, while 35 (19%) of drug abusers showed high performance, 30 (17%) of non-drug abusers showed low performance while 52 (23%) of drug abusers showed low performance and 63 (41%) of non-drug abusers showed low performance. This finding is surprising and it raises one major question “does drug use enhance academic performance?” Shehu and Idris’ (2008) findings, answer this by not concurring with Kobiowu’s (2006) findings. They studied secondary school students in Zaria and found that those who were non smokers of Marijuana performed better than smokers. This, they however attributed to absenteeism on the part of the smokers. One could be misled into arguing that while Kobiowu (2006) used university students, Shehu and Idris (2008) sampled secondary school students hence the difference. However, such arguments might end up highlighting unnecessarily the point that drug abusers were found not to struggle academically more than non abusers i.e. no statistically significant relationship between drug abuse and academic performance (Kobiowu, 2006) and since there is no academic implication (not that there must necessarily be), it might encourage substance use and abuse.

Substance use and abuse has been found to affect academic performance and mental health (Abiodun et al, 1994; Akindutire & Adegboyega, 2012; Fatoye, 3003; Fayombo & Aremu, 2000; Shehu & Idris, 2008), cause physiological and psychiatric disturbances (Mba, 2008), and have been perceived by students to result in poor physical health, poor finance, emotional problems, memory impairment, risk factor for most chronic diseases, problems with family relationships and so forth (Oshodi, Aina & Onajole, 2010). Students continue to use and abuse substances because they are unaware of the harmful effects of drug abuse (Eneh & Stanley, 2004; Oshodi, Aina & Onajole, 2010).

Apart from not knowing the harmful effects of substance abuse (Eneh & Stanley, 2004; Oshodi et al, 2010), “why do students abuse drugs?” seems to be a right question at this point. Studies (Adeyemo, 2007; Afolayan & Afolayan, 2010; Akindutire & Adegboyega, 2012; Azuike et al, 2012; Chikere & Mayowa, 2011; Enakpoya, 2009; Eneh & Stanley, 2004; Essien, 2010; Haladu, 2003; Ihezue, 1988b; Oshodi, Aina & Onajole, 2010; Okoza, Aluede, Fajolu & Okhiku, 2009; Oriahi, 2012; Owodunni, 2008; Shehu & Idris, 2008) have pointed out that among the reasons students abuse drugs are: for experimental curiosity, peer and family influence, lack of parental supervision, personality problems, socioeconomic issues, need for extra energy for work, to build up confidence, frustration, to achieve happiness, to reduce fear, drug availability, need to maintain drug habit in order to avoid withdrawal syndrome, to feel good, to relieve stress, to sleep, to keep awake, to enhance sexual performance, age, unemployment, poverty, and for no reason.

With the increasing rate of substance abuse, an increasing rate of violence has been observed among high school and university students. Wagner (1996) has found a relationship between adolescent substance use and violent behavior. When males abuse alcohol, they are more likely to be violent than females and drug abuse predicts violent behavior (Friedman, 1998). After consuming alcohol, male university students tend to get into fights, have more sexual partners and use less protection (Pillon, O’Brien & Piedra, 2005). Among high school students, uses of illicit substances and alcohol have been found to be related to weapon carrying, fighting and violence (Grunbaum, Basen-Engquist & Pandey, 1998).

It has also been found that every type of substance abuse among adolescents has been linked to weapon carrying and physical fighting (Dukarm, Byrd, Auinger & Weitzman, 1996). Dukarm et al (1996) found alcohol and marijuana to be among the substances which when used recently by their respondents, increased their report of carrying a weapon. They did not find any difference in the violent behavior exhibited by males and females users of illicit substances.

Substance use has been reported to predispose university students to physical and sexual victimization (Reed, Amaro, Matsumoto & Kaysen, 2009). Reed et al (2009) pointed out that their respondents reported that they had used substances and their perpetrators had also used substances during the victimization incidence. This is in concurrence with the findings of Temple and Freeman (2011) who reported a relationship between experiencing dating violence and using alcohol, cigarettes, marijuana and so forth. These studies establish a link between substance abuse and violence.

Apart from violence, university students who use psychoactive substance predispose themselves to risky behaviours (Pillon, O'Brien & Piedra, 2005). Sexual initiation has also been linked to alcohol and tobacco use among vocational students in northern Thailand (Liu et al, 2006). In Kenya, Atwoli, Mungla, Ndungu, Kinoti and Ogot (2011) reported a high prevalence of alcohol and cigarette use among college students and subsequent engagement in violent behaviours and unprotected sex as a result of alcohol consumption.

Psychoactive substance abuse has been linked to cult membership among Nigerian university undergraduates with cult members and previous members reporting abuse of alcohol, tobacco and cannabis more than non cult members (Eze, 2006). Although Eze (2006) used only male university undergraduates, both cult members, previous cult members and non cult members reported using alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, cocaine, amphetamine and heroin. Eze (2006) also found that tobacco and cannabis were reported as the substances in highest use by both the current cult members and past cult members. It is a well known fact that cult membership is also linked with violence among university students in Nigeria. From the foregoing, it is evident that substance use and abuse is related to violence. However, the aim of the present study is to determine students' opinion on substance use and violent behavior, examine the substances students' abuse more from their own point of view, examine the causes of violence in school and possible intervention strategies to be adopted in curbing these in a Nigerian public university.

Method

Settings and participants

This study was conducted using 300 university undergraduates at the Nasarawa State University, Keffi (NSUK), Nigeria. The students were selected from a cross-section of the student body and selection was by simple random sampling. One hundred and fifty males and 150 females responded to the questionnaire. The respondents were between 16 and 33 years of age (Mean age= 23.67; SD=3.77).

A self report questionnaire designed to capture the objective of this study was randomly administered to the randomly selected respondents in their classrooms after the consent form has been completed. A total of 300 respondents responded to the questionnaire. However, 7 of the questionnaires were not correctly responded to hence, they were not analysed for the study. A participation rate of 97.67% was recorded for the 293 analyzed questionnaires.

Measures

A questionnaire with two sections was developed by the authors for the purpose of this study. Section A captured the socio demographic details of the respondents like gender, marital status and religion while section B which is a combination of 19 open and close ended questions captured their opinion on substance abuse and violence within the university.

Procedure

Permission was obtained from the university authorities to conduct the study. One of the researchers administered the questionnaires on the students in their class rooms. The administration procedure was two staged. The first stage was the identification of the students living off campus from those living within the hostels in order to have a balanced response. Once they were dichotomized based on their residence, those living on campus were randomly administered the questionnaires using a simple random sampling method of odd and even technique by administering the questionnaires to only the odd numbered students within the classroom. The same procedure was used to select participants who lived off campus. After the questionnaire distribution, the respondents responded to the questionnaires and their consent form which informed them of the purpose of the study was collected with the filled out questionnaires. The selection procedure was done not taking into cognizance the respondent's department but their level was taken into consideration. Hence, they were selected from year 1 to year 4. However, some year 5 students (6) who went for lectures for carry over courses in some of the classes used were also sampled for the study.

Design and statistics

This study was conducted using a descriptive a cross – sectional survey design method. The data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 19.0. (SPSS Inc, 2010). Chi-square goodness-of-fit and descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data.

Results

This study selected participants from year 1 to 5 within the main campus of NSUK which has faculties of administration, arts, law, education, social sciences, natural and applied sciences. Two hundred and ninety three students out of the sampled 300 students responded correctly to the instrument resulting in 97.67% response rate. The age of the participants ranged between 16 to 33 (above 30) and majority were Christians (Table 1).

Table 1: Socio-demographic Details of participants

| Variables | Nomenclature (N = 293) | Frequency (% = 100) | Percentage |
|----------------|---------------------------|------------------------|------------|
| Gender | Male | 147 | 50.2 |
| | Female | 146 | 49.8 |
| Age | 16 – 20 | 52 | 17.76 |
| | 21 - 25 | 156 | 53.24 |
| | 26 – 30 | 79 | 26.96 |
| | 30 and above | 6 | 2.04 |
| Marital Status | Single | 271 | 92.5 |
| | Married | 22 | 7.5 |
| Religion | Christian | 217 | 74.1 |
| | Islam | 72 | 26.6 |
| | Others | 4 | 1.4 |
| Residence | Hostel | 138 | 47.1 |
| | Off-Campus | 155 | 52.9 |
| Level | Year 1 | 63 | 21.5 |
| | Year 2 | 52 | 17.7 |
| | Year 3 | 80 | 27.3 |
| | Year 4 | 92 | 31.4 |
| | Year 5 | 6 | 2.0 |

Most of the students sampled (80.5%) saw substance abuse as a problem in NSUK and also believed that it could lead to violence (94.5%). Most of the respondents have witnessed violence arising from substance abuse (61.4%). Majority of the respondents believed that male students were more likely to abuse substances (84.6%), and are more likely to engage in violent behaviour (84.3%). Some of the participants however reported being aware of measures put in place at NSUK to curb abuse of substances (67.2%) while some (51.9%) also reported being aware of measure put in place by the school authorities to curb violence (Table 2). The chi-square goodness-of-fit test result shows a significant difference between the opinions of students on substance abuse and violence (Table 2).

Table 2: Opinion of respondents on substance abuse and violence

| Questions | Categories | Frequency (N = 293) | Percentage (% = 100) | X^2 | P-Value |
|--|------------|------------------------|-------------------------|---------|---------|
| Do you see substance Abuse as a problem in NSUK? | Yes | 236 | 80.5 | 861.72 | <.001 |
| | No | 20 | 10.2 | | |
| | Undecided | 27 | 9.2 | | |
| Do you think substance abuse can result in violence among students? | Yes | 277 | 94.5 | 1279.41 | <.001 |
| | No | 9 | 3.1 | | |
| | Undecided | 7 | 2.4 | | |
| Have you witnessed any type of violence resulting from the use of illicit substance? | Yes | 180 | 61.4 | 465.10 | <.001 |
| | No | 95 | 32.4 | | |
| | Undecided | 18 | 6.1 | | |
| Are there other possible cause of violence among students? | Yes | 166 | 56.7 | 337.81 | <.001 |
| | No | 56 | 19.1 | | |
| | Undecided | 71 | 24.2 | | |
| Are male students more | Yes | 248 | 84.6 | 976.83 | <.001 |

| | | | | | |
|--|-----------|-----|------|--------|-------|
| likely to abuse illicit substances more than female students? | No | 29 | 9.9 | | |
| | Undecided | 16 | 5.5 | | |
| Are male students more likely to engage in violent behaviours than female students? | Yes | 247 | 84.3 | 965.98 | <.001 |
| | No | 26 | 8.9 | | |
| | Undecided | 20 | 6.8 | | |
| Are there students activities that are prone to violence? | Yes | 143 | 48.8 | 224.10 | <.001 |
| | No | 41 | 14.0 | | |
| | Undecided | 109 | 37.2 | | |
| Are you aware of measures adopted by NSUK to control the use and abuse of illicit substances among students? | Yes | 197 | 67.2 | 545.89 | <.001 |
| | No | 19 | 6.5 | | |
| | Undecided | 77 | 26.3 | | |
| Are there measures put in place by NSUK to control students' violent behaviours? | Yes | 152 | 51.9 | 264.17 | <.001 |
| | No | 44 | 15.0 | | |
| | Undecided | 97 | 33.1 | | |

The results in Table 3 show that students are more likely to abuse alcohol (61.43%) followed by marijuana (18.43%). While male students are prone to abusing alcohol (40.61%) followed by marijuana (39.93%), female students are more likely to abuse alcohol (63.14%) followed by caffeine (19.45%). This abuse of substance is more likely to occur during weekends (80.20%) as shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Substances commonly abused by students and days they are likely to abuse them

| Questions | Categories | Male (n=147) | Female (n=146) | Frequency (N=293) | Percentage (% = 100) |
|---|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Which substance do you think students commonly abuse? | Alcohol | 83 | 97 | 180 | 61.43 |
| | Caffeine (Coffee) | 14 | 15 | 29 | 9.90 |
| | Marijuana | 33 | 21 | 54 | 18.43 |
| | Tobacco | 17 | 13 | 30 | 10.24 |
| Which substances are Peculiar to abuse by male students? | Alcohol | 56 | 63 | 119 | 40.61 |
| | Marijuana | 58 | 59 | 117 | 39.93 |
| | Tobacco | 27 | 19 | 46 | 15.70 |
| | Caffeine (Coffee) | 6 | 5 | 11 | 3.76 |
| Which substances are Peculiar to abuse by Female students? | Alcohol | 87 | 98 | 185 | 63.14 |
| | Marijuana | 11 | 5 | 16 | 5.46 |
| | Tobacco | 18 | 17 | 35 | 11.95 |
| | Caffeine (Coffee) | 31 | 26 | 57 | 19.45 |
| What are the likely period/ Day of the week that Students frequently abuse Drugs? | Workdays | 16 | 9 | 25 | 8.53 |
| | Weekends | 114 | 121 | 235 | 80.20 |
| | Others | 17 | 16 | 33 | 11.27 |

Table 4 shows that most of the respondents believed that students were more prone to engaging in Physical assault (43.69%) and sexual assault (39.25%) as a result of substance abuse (Table 4). Possible causes of violence among students had anxiety (35.84%), oppression (16.38%) and cultism (15.36%) as the highest while students' activities that are violence inducing had elections (47.44%), sports competition (14.33%) and rallies (12.63%) as the most violence inducing activities among students. While most respondents agreed that

regulations (44.71%) could be used by school authorities in regulating substance use, others (68.26%) believe that school authorities can use counseling in managing violence among student (Table 4).

Table 4: Substance induced violent behaviours, causes and possible curbing strategies

| Questions | Categories | Male (n=147) | Female (n=146) | Frequency (N=293) | Percentage (% = 100) |
|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Violent behaviors | Sexual assault | 74 | 41 | 115 | 39.25 |
| Common to students | Physical assault | 42 | 86 | 128 | 43.69 |
| On account of | Violent crimes | 31 | 19 | 50 | 17.06 |
| Substance abuse. | | | | | |
| Possible causes of | Cultism | 32 | 13 | 45 | 15.36 |
| violence among | Rivalry | 14 | 22 | 36 | 12.29 |
| students | Frustration | 12 | 10 | 22 | 7.51 |
| | Anxiety | 48 | 57 | 105 | 35.84 |
| | School policies | 23 | 14 | 37 | 12.62 |
| | Oppression | 18 | 30 | 48 | 16.38 |
| Student activities | Elections | 67 | 72 | 139 | 47.44 |
| that are prone | Sports competition | 30 | 12 | 42 | 14.33 |
| to violence | Parties | 13 | 22 | 35 | 11.95 |
| | Rallies | 18 | 19 | 37 | 12.63 |
| | Protests | 8 | 14 | 22 | 7.51 |
| | Student's | | | | |
| | demonstrations | 11 | 7 | 18 | 6.14 |
| What school | Regulations | 59 | 72 | 131 | 44.71 |
| authorities can | Enlightenment | 45 | 54 | 99 | 33.79 |
| do to control | Counseling | 43 | 59 | 63 | 21.50 |

substance
abuse among
students.

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|----|-----|-----|-------|
| Measure school | Punishment | 96 | 104 | 200 | 68.26 |
| Authorities can | Seminars | 13 | 21 | 34 | 11.60 |
| take to control | Counseling | 6 | 5 | 11 | 3.75 |
| violence among | Use of religious | | | | |
| Students | and ethnic groups | | | | |
| | to promote peace | 32 | 16 | 48 | 16.38 |

Majority of the respondents (63.48%) believed that wealthy students were more likely than average (26.96%) and below average (9.56%) students to abuse drugs and engage in violent behaviors (Table 5).

Table 5: Economic status of students most likely to abuse drug and engage in violence

| Question | Categories | Male (n = 147) | Female (n=146) | Frequency (N=293) | Percentage (% = 100) |
|----------------------|------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Which class/category | Wealthy | 91 | 95 | 186 | 63.48 |
| of Students are more | Average | 41 | 38 | 79 | 26.96 |
| Likely to engage in | Below- | 15 | 13 | 28 | 9.56 |
| Substance abuse and | average | | | | |
| Violence. | | | | | |

Discussion

Drug use and abuse among university students is rampant (Adelekan et al, 2000; Kobiowu, 2006; Egbochukwu et al, 2009; Chikere & Mayowa, 2011; Okoza et al, 2009) and this has been linked to violence from the results above. We have found from this study that more than 80% of students sampled believe that substance abuse is a major problem in NSUK and can cause violent behaviors among students.

Alcohol and substance use may lead to violence (Boles & Miotto, 2003; Chermack & Blow, 2002). The finding from our study where 61.43% of students believed that students were more likely to abuse alcohol is in line with Okoza et al (2009) who reported an actual abuse rate of 66% among students of Ambrose Alli University sampled for their study. In line with this, Ibiwoye and Adeleke (2011) reported that 20% of the students they sampled from the University of Lagos took marijuana or smoked excessively while 19% excessively drank alcohol. Furthermore, Owoaje and Bello (2010) reported 40.9% use of alcohol and 36.4% use of Kolanut among students of University of Ibadan and more current use among females (16.4%) was higher than males (10.2%). Among students of Ekiti state university, Federal Polytechnic Ado-Ekiti and College of Education Ikere, Akindutire and Adegboyega (2012) recently found a consumption rate of 47.9 % and 43.8 % for alcohol and tobacco respectively. These concurring studies highlight the fact that actual substance use is fast becoming a major issue in the society as a result of uninhibited use by undergraduate students.

The determining role of substance abuse in violent behavior had earlier been highlighted by previous studies (Friedman, 1998; Dukarm et al, 1996; Pillion et al, 2005; Reed et al, 2009; Wagner, 1996) but has been further established from students' opinion by this study. For instance, Engs and Hanson (1994) found a relationship between alcohol and students' fighting, having legal troubles, vandalism, having trouble with their school administration among university students.

Sexual assault, physical assault and violent crimes reported by our respondents as violent behaviors common to students on account of substance abuse is in concurrence with Abbey's (1991) findings on acquaintance rape and alcohol consumption among college students. Also, when university students drink or use drugs, it predisposes them more to sexual assault or rape (Reed et al, 2009).

The opinion of students on the peculiarity of substances like alcohol and marijuana to males is consistent with other studied (Essien, 2010; Yusuf, 2010) while their opinion that females consume alcohol more than other substances is in line with the finding by Pillon, O'Brien and Piedra (2005) who reported that female students were found to use more alcohol

and tobacco than male students while males had the tendency to consume more quantities than females in a Brazilian university. Apart from the present study that sampled university students and others highlighted, it has been found in a nationwide survey that, “alcohol is the most commonly used psychoactive drug in Nigeria” Gureje et al (2007, p.1).

Weapon carrying has been linked to alcohol and drug use among university students (Presley, Meilman & Cashin, 1997). This weapon carrying could be one of the reasons they engage in more violence when aggravated. Valois, McKeown, Garrison and Vincent (1994) had found the same trend of weapon carrying, drinking, drug use and sexual activity as predictors of violence among high school students. As much as 61.4% of our respondents have witnessed violence as a result of substance. This calls for more efforts towards reducing violence and circulation of illicit substances in schools.

Although we did not investigate school violence and substance use, it has been found that when illegal drugs are available in school, there is increase in school violence (Lowry et al, 1999). Even with the availability of drugs, it has been found by our study, that students who are wealthy (63.48%) are more likely to engage in substance abuse and violence than their average and below average counterparts. This could mean students who have cash available since Omigbodun and Babalola (2004) have found that when young people do not have the resources to obtain illicit substances, they go as far as stealing to maintain their habits.

Drug use and alcohol predisposes students to being violent and also paradoxically makes them victims of victimization as a result of their behaviours (Kingery, Pruitt & Hurley, 1992). Sexual abuse victims have been found to use alcohol and substance (Harrison, Jayne & Beebe, 1997; King et al, 2004). These predisposing factors could be circumvented by universities enacting and enforcing laws to curb abuse of substances or using environmental modification as suggested by Valois et al (1994).

Conclusion

Although the findings of the present study on students’ opinion on substance use and violent behavior seems disturbing, it is gratifying to know from the experience of the authors that NSUK has put measures in place to curb the use of illicit substances and this is known by the students. With further regulations, enlightenment and counseling, it is expected that substance use and abuse will be curbed. Also, with punishment, seminars, counseling and use of religious and ethnic groups to promote peace as the students have suggested, it is believed that violent behavior among students would be curbed.

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